

*Government.*

643 Chiefs as rulers. There is no king of the country, nor is there any single paramount chief; the Bantu chiefs claim equal, if not superior, rights to the land. Certain chiefs rule over extensive districts inhabited by the Nilotics, and their rights as leaders are considered to be hereditary; they are also looked to in cases requiring settlement or legislation.

423 Land tenure. Land which has not been cultivated in the past may be tilled by any family; but, when once it has been tilled, the community regard it as the property of the family whose ancestor first cultivated it. Should it be left fallow for a number of years, no other family may appropriate and till it without first obtaining the original owner's permission. Few people seek such permission, preferring to dig virgin-land which will afterwards belong to their children.

621 Local chiefs as the magistrates. The people live in communities. They build their houses in close proximity and in most cases surround them with a growing fence, leaving a gateway which can be closed during the night or in times of danger. Such a village group is ruled by a sub-chief who is under the authority of the district-chief. The chief of a village is magistrate and controls the general affairs of his people. This chief levies no taxes, but his people make him presents of goats and sheep, and of grain also at harvest time.

692 Courts and court fees. Any person wishing to bring a charge against another for any offence, real or imaginary, 694 pays a small fee to the chief of the village before whom he lays his complaint or accusation. The chief or elder then summons 695 the accused person and appoints a time when the case shall be heard. The chief sits with one or two village elders and gives his judgment. A person may appeal from a village chief to the principal chief in the district, and the elder who first tried the case will then go to the superior chief to be present when the case is reheard. The parties appealing have to pay fresh court-fees before the case is retried. The punishment in almost every case is a fine and the amount is determined by the gravity of the case. The losing party has to